

INDIANA CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

Change in Authorizer Application

For Indiana Charter Schools

July 2015

Dear Charter School Operator:

In May 2011, House Enrolled Act 1002 (HEA 1002) was enacted by the Indiana legislature and signed into law by Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels. Among other provisions, HEA 1002 established the Indiana Charter School Board (ICSB), a new charter school authorizer established for the purpose of sponsoring charter schools around the state. The ICSB has conducted six application cycles and authorized schools in locations around the state proposed by ten different charter school organizers. The first three schools authorized by the ICSB opened in August 2012, and five more opened in August 2013.

Thank you for your interest in applying to the Indiana Charter School Board to launch a new charter school. The ICSB is committed to the highest levels of quality for itself and the schools it authorizes. The work of the ICSB is guided by five core principles:

- Students First. When performing its duties, the ICSB always assesses whether its actions will further the best interests of students.
- High Expectations. The ICSB expects the charter schools it authorizes to set high academic achievement expectations, develop strong plans for family and community engagement, and adhere to high ethical standards for students, staff and board members. Similarly, the ICSB establishes high performance expectations, engagement plans and ethical standards for itself.
- Excellence in Leadership. Operating a high-performing charter school requires excellent leadership from school boards and staff. The ICSB authorizes schools that can demonstrate strong leadership at both the school governance and administrative levels.
- Commitment to Innovation. The ICSB is particularly interested in operators that show strong potential to accelerate student success through dramatically different school models, instructional strategies, uses of technology, staffing models, governance arrangements, family and community engagement strategies, and other approaches.
- Rigorous and Transparent Accountability. The ICSB holds schools accountable for performance through rigorous and transparent accountability mechanisms that uphold schools' autonomy, foster excellence, and protect student and public interests. In turn, the ICSB is held to a high performance bar by the State Board of Education.

The application materials and process described herein draw upon the expertise of successful charter school authorizers from around the country. Each application will be carefully evaluated for its alignment with the ICSB's core principles and compliance with applicable law. Only those applicants who can demonstrate the capacity to operate high-performing charter schools will receive charters from the Indiana Charter School Board.

As you complete the application, please feel free to contact the ICSB staff with any questions. We are committed to responding in a timely manner and can be reached at (317) 232-7585. More information can be found on the ICSB website: <http://www.in.gov/icsb>.

Thank you for your commitment to providing a high-quality education for Indiana students.

Sincerely,



Michelle McKeown

Interim Executive Director, Indiana Charter School Board

CHANGE IN AUTHORIZER APPLICATION: For Indiana Charter Schools

INTRODUCTION

The Indiana Charter School Board (ICSB) is committed to authorizing high quality charter schools with proven results. The ICSB accepts applications from Indiana charter schools that wish to change authorizers, and will consider authorizing applicants that can demonstrate strong academic outcomes, fiscal responsibility, and compliance with the charter and applicable laws.

In creating its application materials, the ICSB has benchmarked with successful charter school authorizers from around the country. Every effort has been made to establish a rigorous, transparent and streamlined application review process. When assessing applicant qualifications and capacity, the ICSB will draw upon the expertise of its staff and external evaluators experienced with charter school application reviews. The final decision on all change in authorizer applications will be made by the appointed members of the Indiana Charter School Board.

If you need assistance with the application, please contact the ICSB Interim Executive Director, Michelle McKeown, at 317-232-7585 or at mmckeown@icsb.in.gov. Additional information and application resources can be found on the ICSB website: www.in.gov/icsb.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

PROCESS STAGE	DATE (2015)
Change in Authorizer Request Procedures Released	July 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ICSB posts its forms and procedures for Change in Authorizer requests. 	
Letters of Intent Due	August 10, 12:00 p.m. EST (NOON)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools that wish to submit a Change in Authorizer Application are required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) indicating their interest in applying to the ICSB. The Letter of Intent form must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. EDT. Information contained within the LOI will be utilized for planning purposes by the ICSB, and the legal name of the applicant will be posted on the ICSB website. 	
Applications Due	September 9, 12:00 p.m. EST (NOON)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications must be submitted in complete and final form by 12:00 p.m. EDT. Late or incomplete submissions will not be accepted. Per Indiana statute and ICSB policy, application submissions will be posted on the ICSB website. Applicants wishing to keep specific components of the application confidential must receive a written advisory opinion regarding any confidentiality request from Indiana's Public Access Counselor <u>prior</u> to the proposal deadline. 	
Application Evaluation and Due Diligence Review	September 10 – October 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teams consisting of ICSB staff and external evaluators will evaluate applications and conduct independent due diligence as necessary. 	
Site Visits	October 7 – October 21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Site Visit is required for applicants that have submitted a Change in Authorizer Request. Site Visit dates and times will be scheduled once applications have been submitted. 	
Public Hearings	October 19 – October 30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required by Indiana law, public hearings will be held to allow for public comment from community members. ICSB staff and Board members attend each hearing. Specific locations, dates and times will be scheduled once all proposals are submitted. 	
Indiana Charter School Board Meeting	Week of November 16 (Date TBD)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICSB Board members will conduct a final Q&A with each applicant group. ICSB Board members will make qualification decisions based on recommendations from ICSB staff, and any additional information considered by the ICSB. 	

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS: Change in Authorizer Request

The Change in Authorizer Application seeks information about all major aspects of:

- the governing body and school leadership team;
- the school's academic performance record;
- the school's financial health; and
- the school's record of organizational compliance.

The application questions are organized to solicit information efficiently and to aid quality review and decision making by the ICSB. **ICSB staff reserves the right to reject applications that do not adhere to the application specifications.**

More information about the Indiana Charter School Board's application process and helpful application resources can be found on the ICSB website: www.in.gov/icsb.

Notice of Disclosure

All information submitted as part of the application (including financial information) is subject to the Indiana Access to Public Records Act (IC § 5-14-3) and subject to disclosure to the public there-under, including disclosure to the media. **In the event that it is the applicant's position that certain information submitted as part of the application falls within an exception to disclosure under the Public Records Act, the applicant must obtain an advisory opinion from the State of Indiana's Public Access Counselor prior to submitting any application materials.** If the Public Access Counselor's opinion supports the applicant's position, then any such information contained in the application that is considered non-disclosable must be clearly identified in the application as confidential. The application must further be accompanied by (a) a written statement specifying the particular exception or exceptions to disclosure under the Public Records Act applicable to the information sought to be exempted from disclosure, and (b) the written opinion from the Public Access Counselor that supports the applicant's position that the information is exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act. **NOTE:** Applicants are advised to submit requests for advisory opinions to the Public Access Counselor as soon as possible to ensure the applicant receives an opinion before the ICSB application deadline lapses.

The applicant acknowledges that if the foregoing procedure is not followed, and an application is submitted, all information shall be subject to disclosure to the public unless the ICSB determines that it must withhold from disclosure certain information in the application pursuant to the Public Records Act. Each applicant, by the submission of an application, acknowledges its understanding that all application materials are subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act and may be subject to review and copying by the public. Each applicant and its representatives, employees and agents acknowledges and agrees that the ICSB Board members and staff, the Indiana Department of Education, and any official, agent, employee or representative of the State of Indiana shall not be held liable or legally responsible in any way for any such disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act, and such parties hereby waive any rights to redress or claims of action pursuant to any such disclosure.

Specifications

- The proposal must be typed, single-spaced, and single-sided, on white, 8.5"x 11" paper, with 1-inch page margins and a minimum of 11-point font.

- Schools must use the following formats in preparing their applications:
 - School Overview Template (MS Word Document)
 - Proposal Narrative (MS Word Document)
 - Attachments as specified in the table below
- **Do not exceed 10 pages** for the proposal narrative. Attachments do not count toward the proposal narrative page limit.
- All required attachments should be numbered in the order noted below and clearly labeled.
- The following is a list of attachments to accompany the application:

REQUIRED PROPOSAL ATTACHMENTS		
NUMBER	ATTACHMENT NAME	REQUIRED FORMAT
1	Board Officer Resumes	MS Word or PDF
2	Board Minutes	MS Word or PDF
3	Head of School/ Principal Resume	MS Word or PDF
4	Governance Documents	MS Word or PDF
5	(If applicable) Education Service Provider (ESP) Documentation	MS Word or PDF
6	Academic Performance Workbook	Use required template
7	Authorizer Accountability/Annual Report	MS Word or PDF
8	School Financials	MS Word or Excel, or PDF
9	(If applicable) School Litigation Documents	MS Word or PDF
10	Entire Application (excluding items exempt from Indiana's Public Access Laws assuming prior written approval from Indiana's Public Access Counselor)	One combined PDF file (for posting to the ICSB website)

- Review your application for completeness before submitting.
- **Late or incomplete submissions will not be accepted.**

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Letter of Intent

The Letter of Intent (LOI) should be emailed to the Indiana Charter School Board using the following address: charter-applications@icsb.in.gov no later than 12 p.m. EST on August 10, 2015. Please note that there is a customized LOI template for Change in Authorizer requests.

Application

Entities that meet the LOI deadline are eligible to submit an application during the Fall 2015 application cycle. The full application should be submitted no later than 12 p.m. (NOON) EST on September 9, 2015.

Web-Based Submission

Prepare and upload your application using the ICSB's web-based application system, Review Room. The ICSB Review Room site may be accessed by copying and pasting the following web address into your browser: **icsb-charter-app.myreviewroom.com**. Once on the site, each applicant group must establish an account. Room. There is a WebEx posted on the ICSB website that provides applicants with an overview of Review Room.

Each section of the application is uploaded separately, so applicants may prepare each section as a separate document. Review Room will not allow you to submit your application until you have uploaded all required documents and completed the application submission checklist.

Review Room will automatically shut down access to all applications at 12:00 p.m. (NOON) EST on September 9, 2015. Please ensure that your application is complete and submitted before that time. For planning purposes, ensure you begin uploading your proposal and all required attachments approximately one day prior to the deadline. Please be advised that combining the proposal narrative and required attachments into one PDF file may take some time, so this step in the application preparation process should commence well in advance of the deadline. **Applications not submitted by the deadline will not be accepted.**

No hard copy submission or email submission is required.

Please be aware it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all application materials reach the Indiana Charter School Board office by the established deadline. Failure to submit a timely or complete application will serve as grounds to reject the application. Please note that all submissions are final; revised versions of the application may not be submitted.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

NOTE: The full application, including this form, will be posted on the ICSB website. Applicants are advised that local community members, including members of the media, may contact the designated representative for questions about the change in authorizer application.

Name of Charter School:

School Address:

Name of Board Chair:

Office and cell phone numbers:

Email address:

Name of Head of School /Principal:

Office and cell phone numbers:

Email address:

Year School Opened:

Name of Current Authorizer:

Does the school contract or partner with an Education Service Provider (ESP) or other organization for school management/operation? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, identify the ESP or other partner organization:

Current and Projected Grade Levels and Student Enrollment (per current charter agreement):

Academic Year	Grade Levels Served	Student Enrollment (Actual or Planned)
2013-2014		
2014-2015		
At Capacity		

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Please respond to the following questions, limiting your narrative response to 10 pages, excluding attachments.

Executive Summary

1. Provide a brief description of the school's mission and vision.
2. Provide a brief narrative highlighting the school's accomplishments since its launch. Briefly address the opportunities and challenges facing the school.
3. Explain why the school's board would like to switch authorizers.

Governance & Management

1. What legal entity is the school's charter holder? How does the chosen governance model support quality oversight of the school, including monitoring of academic outcomes, financial health, organizational compliance, and school leadership performance? Please list all active board committees (e.g., Finance Committee).
2. List the school's current board members and provide a brief explanation of the expertise each member brings to the board. Has there been any significant board member turnover? How long has the current Board Chair been in his or her role? As **Attachment 1**, provide resumes for the Board Chair and all other Board officers. As **Attachment 2**, provide a copy of the Board minutes from the last three Board meetings.
3. Describe the school's leadership structure. How does this support the school design, as well as effective operations of the school? Has there been any significant leadership turnover at the school? As **Attachment 3**, provide the resume for the current Head of School/Principal.
4. As **Attachment 4**, provide a copy of the school's Governance Documents (i.e., 501(c)(3) Letter of Determination from the Internal Revenue Service, Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Conflicts of Interest/Code of Ethics Policies).

Education Service Provider

NOTE: This section applies only to charter schools that contract with an Education Service Provider (ESP) to manage school operations.

1. Explain why the Education Service Provider (ESP) was selected to manage the school. How satisfied is the board with the ESP's performance to date?
2. Summarize the primary responsibilities of the ESP. As **Attachment 5**, provide a copy of the executed contract with the ESP.

School Overview

Education Program

1. Describe the guiding educational philosophy of your school. Provide an overview of the curricula, tools, methods and instructional techniques that support the educational philosophy.
2. Describe the interim assessments (e.g., DIBELS, Acuity, NWEA MAP, TABE) used by the school to assess student performance and improvement.
3. Is the board satisfied with the school's academic outcomes to date? If no, what corrective actions has the school taken to ensure the school is on a positive academic trajectory? As **Attachment 6**, provide the completed Academic Performance Workbook (please use provided template). As **Attachment 7**, provide a copy of the school's most recent accountability/annual report prepared by the current authorizer.

Financial Management

1. What staff member is primarily responsible for managing the school's finances? Does the school have any contracts for bookkeeping services? If yes, please provide the name of any providers.
2. As **Attachment 8**, provide the following financial information for the school and any related business entities:
 - a. The last three years of audited financial statements and management letters for the school; and
 - b. Current fiscal year budget and year-to-date actual expenses.

Operations and Compliance

1. Is the school facing any major operational challenges, including challenges with facilities, transportation, technology, school lunch program, etc.? If yes, briefly describe the board's plan to address these challenges.
2. Identify any current or past litigation, including arbitration proceedings, involving the charter school. Provide the following as **Attachment 9**: (a) the demand, (b) any response to the demand, and (c) the results of the arbitration or litigation.

Other Information

1. Describe any other information the board believes is relevant to the ICSB's evaluation of the school's Change in Authorizer application.

ADDITIONAL APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT

1. As **Attachment 10**, provide one PDF file that contains all application components, including the School Overview Template, the Proposal Narrative Template, and all required Attachments. This PDF file will be posted on the ICSB website as required under Indiana law and in accordance with ICSB policy. Therefore, please be certain that this attachment contains no confidential personal information. In addition, please adhere with the guidelines provided under the Notice of Disclosure section on page 5 of this document for any other information considered confidential.